

Applicants traverse the rejection and request reconsideration and withdrawal in view of the following arguments.

Claim 1 of the present invention is directed to an absorbent article comprising a reinforcement nonwoven joined to an inner-facing surface (70B) of the backsheet (27) (as shown best in Figure 2A) and to at least one of either the rear ear panels or the front ear panels, the reinforcement nonwoven not substantially overlapping the containment assembly. (Emphasis added.) This reinforcement non-woven provides additional strength for the front or rear panels of the present invention.

Section 2131 of the MPEP states: "TO ANTICIPATE A CLAIM, THE REFERENCE MUST TEACH EVERY ELEMENT OF THE CLAIM" (emphasis in original).

The Suzuki reference does not teach every element of claim 1. For example, the Suzuki reference does not teach the element d) of claim 1:

- (d) a reinforcement nonwoven joined to an inner-facing surface of the backsheet and to at least one of either the rear ear panels or the front ear panels, the reinforcement nonwoven not substantially overlapping the containment assembly.

Rather, the Suzuki reference teaches away, by specifically teaching to join a back layer 15b to the topsheet 2 and not to the backsheet 3, as best shown in Fig 2 of the Suzuki reference, as opposed to the inner-facing surface 70B of the backsheet 27 of the present invention, as best shown in Fig. 2a and 2b of the specification.

Accordingly, the Zuzuki reference does not anticipate claim 1.

With respect to the dependent claims 2-10, depending from claim 1, because claim 1 is not anticipated by the Suzuki reference, the dependent claims 2-10, also are not anticipated by the Suzuki reference.

**CONCLUSION**

In light of the above amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw rejections and allow the pending claims 1-10. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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